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TRANSLATION

TITLE: FOURTEEN-DAY SUBMARINE CHASE IN THE
STOCKHOLM SKERRIES

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FOURTEEN-DAY SUBMARINE CHASE IN THE STOCKHOLM SKERRIES

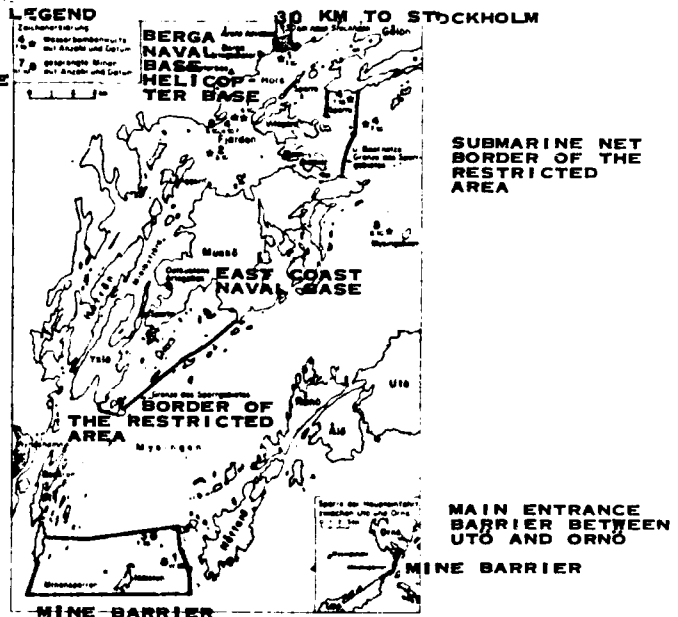
[Westerlund, Karl-Erik; Marine-Rundschau, Feb. 1983,
B 20113 E; German]

Since the year 1007 AD the Horsfjärden in the southern Stockholm Skerries has not been the scene of such violent events as during the period from 1 to 15 October 1982. A quantity of depth charges and several mines were detonated in the presumed hunt for "unknown" submarines.

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★ NUMBER OF DEPTH CHARGES DROPPED
AND DATE

● NUMBER OF MINES DETONATED AND DATE



975 years ago a bloody sea battle happened there. The Norwegian *Olaf Haraldson* defeated the Viking chief *Sote*. The Norwegian later became king of Norway and even assumed the name *Olaf den helige* (Olaf The Holy). The name *Sote* can still be noted today: his Hof Sotinge is only a few hundred meters from the shore of the Horsfjärden, where the "sea battle" of 1982 was fought.

Sweden - with 2,700 kilometers of coastline, of which more than 80 percent is on the Baltic and its northern golf - has been subjected to constant violations of its territorial waters for the last 20 years both in the air and in the sea. Soviet, Polish and East German as well as West German and surface combatants of the other NATO countries have often penetrated the boundaries of Swedish territorial waters without authorization. The border violations in the air are innumerable - most of them have however probably been unintentional.

The violations of territorial waters below the surface are the really serious violations, because most probably up to 90 % they have been committed very deliberately. Alone between 1975 - 1980 the Swedish High Command could note 60 definite "submarine incidents" within Swedish territorial waters. These 60 incidents are those in which emergencies were declared. If the 2,700 km long coast and the thinly populated archipelago are considered, then these sixty incidents could represent only a tenth of the actual violations!

The Soviet "Whiskey" submarine No. 137, which ran aground far inside /72/ the restricted area of the Karlskrona fortress on 27. October 1981, caused the greatest degree of notoriety of all of these "incidents"*.

* See. "Whiskey on The Rocks" in: Marine Rundschau, Vol. 1/1982, pp. 30 - 35.

This old submarine was also equipped with at least one, perhaps even two torpedoes with nuclear warheads.

ALARM IN HORSFJÄRDEN - INSIDE THE NAVAL HARBOR AND THE SHIPYARD AREA

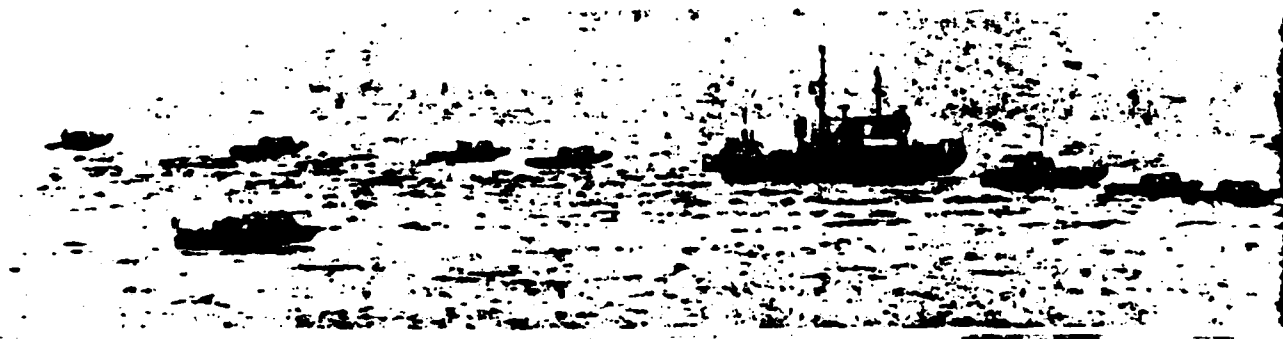
On 1. October 1982 there were indications that a unknown foreign was in the Horsfjärden and was maneuvering underwater. This predicated an approach leg of several hours, first through the twelve km wide territorial waters, then across the difficult to navigate archipelago southeast of Stockholm, then penetration into the inner skerry passages and the restricted area around the Muskö naval base with shipyard and so called naval anchorages, etc. The shipyard here has destroyer and submarine docks, torpedo boat and minesweeper slips, supply depots, complete naval workshops, power plants, etc., all of which are excavated in Swedish mountain rock. The peacetime headquarters of the "Ostkustens örlogsbas" - Naval Command East - is also located at Muskö.

The entire penetration of the submarine must have occurred underwater, perhaps occasionally with snorkel, but as well in channels with to an extent vigorous civilian traffic!

The fact that a foreign submarine had penetrated to this point appeared to be almost incredible. However, the evidence for this was considerable. Helicopters with hydrophones were soon able to determine that a submarine - or a similar underwater vehicle - was maneuvering in the Horsfjärden. Fast attack missile craft, minesweepers, minehunters and landing craft (of the Coast Artillery) were soon committed. The first depth charge was dropped.

Small detection ships of the Swedish Navy search the waters of Horsfjärden and found a possible submarine concealed in an underwater canyon.

Foto: P. Diedrich, Svenskt Pressfoto



On 2. October the hydrophones picked up new indications. Four depth /73/ charges were dropped, and a fifth depth charge was dropped in the northern part of the Jungfrufjärden, an area north of the island of Ornö, northeast of Horsfjärden.

On 3. October there were new indications of a "possible" submarine and depth charges were dropped.

During the night of 4. October there were additional indications in the form of radar echoes, hydrophone echoes, air eddies and water bubbles. There were Doppler effects - this meant that the submarine was moving. Nine depth charges were dropped, and thereafter an oil slick 50 x 50 m wide appeared. In the evening there was detection of a second submarine in the vicinity of Sandhamn, the island which is well known to sailing enthusiasts, is east of the Swedish capital, far north of the Horsfjärden and a forward island on the edge of the open sea.

Therefore, at least two - perhaps three or more foreign submarines - were involved in this operation. The second and possibly third submarine apparently had the mission to attract the attention of the Swedish Navy to itself in order to provide relief and diversion for the submarine in the Horsfjärden.

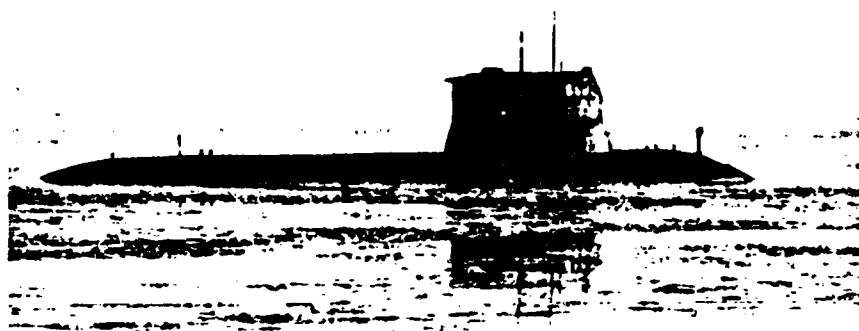
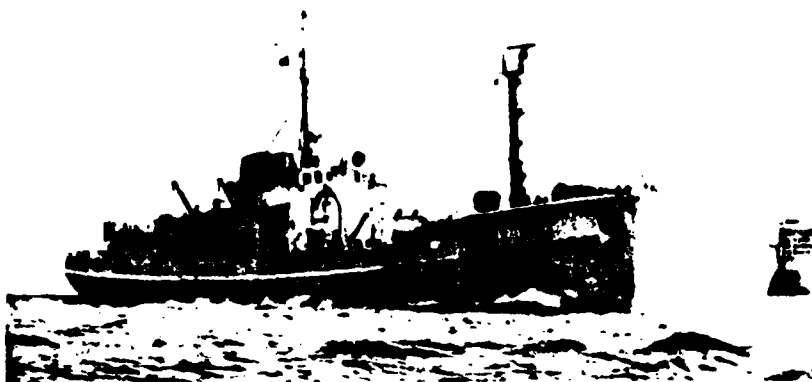
On 5 October numerous different naval ships and helicopters were committed to the search. Several detections of a non-moving submarine were noted in the Horsfjärden and eleven depth charges were dropped there. Below the surface Horsfjärden is like a mountainous area with depths up to 40 meters. Between the underwater cliffs there are small narrow "underwater valleys", which makes it possible for a submarine to conceal itself in them.

The next day new minehunters and minesweepers came to the area as well as the submarine rescue ship BELOS. Somewhat pathetically the destroyer SMÅLAND, half of the current Swedish destroyer inventory, could be seen in mothballs from the press headquarters located in the "Berga örlogsskolor". It was not used in the search, nor was its sister ship HALLAND. In these narrow waters smaller ships were more appropriate.

The Horsfjärden had already been "blocked" in the first days of the search with submarine nets. The southern barrier could be closed /74/ completely immediately - the northern barrier was only successively increased and deepened. The (Swedish) submarine SJÖHUNDEN was also deployed in the vicinity of the northern barrier in order to reinforce the surveillance with its hydrophones. Detection and measurement ships of the Central Maritime Office (as usual manned by the Navy) were employed in order to determine whether or not there were differences in relation to the secret naval charts for the Horsfjärden - unfortunately these efforts were unsuccessful.

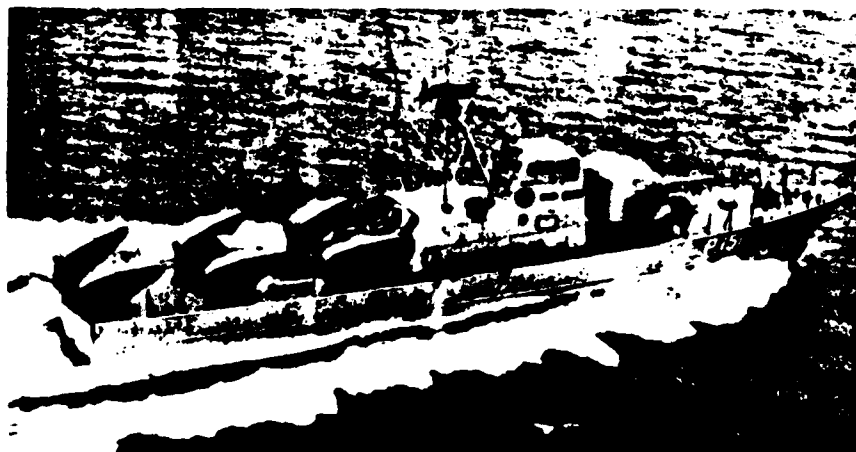
THE SUBMARINE SUCCEEDED IN BREAKING OUT ON 7. OCTOBER

On 7. October at 1300 hours there were indications in the northern net barrier, which were interpreted as a break-out attempt. However, no submarine was discovered. In the afternoon new detections outside of the Horsfjärden indicated that the break-out attempt had perhaps succeeded - or that a second submarine was there. In this instance could it have been the same submarine, which had appeared in the vicinity of Sandhamn? Three ground mines were detonated. Unfortunately, authorization for detonating the mines had to be issued by the Naval Command Staff with corresponding delay - in wartime the mine station commander can of course do this without authorization from higher headquarters. Four depth charges were also dropped, but no submarine or submarine hulk was discovered.



The following ships were involved in the submarine hunt: the submarine rescue ship BELOS (A211), the submarine SJÖHUNDEN, the fast attack missile craft HUGIN (P151) and the coastal minesweeper M23.

Fotos: Schwedische Marine/Archiv Westerlund



There was also a radar echo detection on the following day outside of the northern barrier. Detections were also made inside the barriers in southern Horsfjärden. The fact that at least two unknown submarines were involved in this operation was definitively confirmed.

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On 9. October new mine lines were laid inside the Horsfjärden, but there were no new indications on this or the following day.

On the morning of 11. October there was hydrophone contact again, and a mine was detonated in the afternoon.

On the following day it could be determined that two submarines were outside of the Horsfjärden, both east of the northern barrier and in the Gulf of Danzig, the southern approach to the Stockholm skerries, between the old fortress Mälsten and the Island Nättarö. In this area the searchers had hydrophone contacts for several hours, but the submarine could not be located.



The Boeing -Vertol Mod. 107 helicopters of the Swedish Navy operated in pairs during the submarine hunt in the Horsfjärden. Here helicopter is dropping its "dip sonar", while helicopter 71 is ready with three depth charges on each side.

Photo: I. Karmhed, Svenskt Pressfoto.

The surveillance was also continued later, until it was certain that /74/ there were no other submarines within Swedish territorial waters, but no further weapons were used. 36 depth charges were dropped and four mines were detonated during the 14-day hunt.

The commander of the Naval Command East ("Ostkustens örlogsbas"), Konteradmiral (Rear Admiral) *Christer Kierkegaard*, had local responsibility for the submarine hunt. However, the commander-in-chief of the Army, General *Lennart Ljung*, was involved every day with the submarine hunt and was in constant contact with the government.

CURRENT RESULTS

During the examination of thesea bottom in October/November 1982, the Swedish Navy found submarine hull impressions both inside the Horsfjärden and in the outside areas, which provide the definitive evidence that at least two submarines had been there in a passive attitude.

615 JOURNALISTS, OF WHICH 205 WERE FOREIGN, AT THE PRESS HEADQUARTERS

The submarine chase in the Stockholm skerries became an international sensation. 615 journalists and photographers, representatives of newspapers, radio and television, of which 205 were foreigners, assembled at the press headquarters in "Berga örlogsskolor" (Berga Naval Training Center) on the mainland shore of the Horsfjärden, where an entire training hall with adjacent rooms for telephones and teletype were available - even the woman's voluntary corps, the so called Lotta's, provided food day and night!

The journalists were in competition and attempt to trump their /75/ colleagues with rumours, phantasies, "secrets", etc. The liar's record was established by the Italians: the news agency "Ansa" stated that Sweden was negotiating in Switzerland with the "owner" of the submarine, in order to resolve the situation peacefully. Denials of the Swedish Foreign Ministry did not help - the Ansa-lies were not only ventilated in the Italian press, in radio and television, but also in other countries. The Swedish government and the Commander-in-Chief of the Army would have been grateful to find an "owner" of the submarine, but they had not proof of the nationality of the submarines.

With the background of the appearance of the Soviet W-submarine 137 in Gåsefjärden in the restricted zone south of Karlskrona on 27 October 1981, it is understandable that most people and the mass media regarded the submarines inside the Stockholm skerries as being Soviet. This could however never be stated officially.

After a six-day silence TASS appeared suddenly on 6. October with the curious commentaries: "There are statements about to whom the submarine belongs - some versions generate suspicion and hostility against the Eastern neighbours of Sweden..."

The TASS-telegram arrived just at the moment, when the submarine in the Horsfjärden had presumably forced the northern barrier.

WHAT MISSIONS DID THE TWO OR THREE "UNKNOWN" SUBMARINES HAVE?

What did the "unknown" submarines in the Stockholm skerries want to investigate, reconnoiter or do?

Of course, only the chief of the particular staff of the "unknown" country could provide a specific answer. However, one or more purposes in the following are probable: 1-Final test of one or several junior

submarine commanders, before they assume command of larger submarines equipped with nuclear weapons. /75/

2. Investigation of the Swedish ground mine fields, which are already laid in peacetime, location of the firing stations and of the cables.
3. Deployment of bottom listening devices and/or electronic navigation aids.
4. Test of Swedish readiness and reaction speed and of the capability of the Swedish ASW-ships and their equipment.
5. Reconnaissance of suitable comtiency and firing stations for submarines equipped with nuclear missiles.

This last possibility is the worst. If a conflict should develop between NATO and the Warsar Pact and Sweden declares its absolute neutrality as in 1914 and 1939, then it would be very advantageous to have firing sites for submarines with nuclear missiles in the Swedish skerries. If these sites should be located by the opponent - NATO -, then Sweden would be in a terrible dilemma. Perhaps NATO would have to eliminate these launching sites, and then probably nuclear bombs would detonate over the Stockholm skerries and would impact on the capital. However, at that time, the submarines would have gone to other sites off the Swedish coast...

With such imminent possibilities, it is understandable that the Swedish government has to make exertions, both for the reconstruction of the Navy and to provide better ASW-capabilities for the current "peacetime" conditions.

Something, but not much, is in progress.

THREE NEW "PEACEFUL" ASW-WEAPONS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED

The fact that the Swedish Navy does not have adequate ASW-equipment unfortunately is known both by high command and the Navy Chief of Staff and by most people - and by the rest of the world as well. The government and parliament have therefore allocated several hundred million additional Kroner in order to improve ASW-equipment as a result of the numerous "submarine incidents", particularly the appearance of the W-submarine 137 in Gåsefjärden.

The research agency of the Swedish Armed Forces ("FOA"), the naval technicians and the weapons industry at the initiative of the Naval Chief of Staff Vice-Admiral *Per Rudberg* have developed three new weapons suitable for "peaceful" ASW, which will go into series production after the Spring of 1983. Therefore, these weapons will be available, when the intensified ASW-regulations go into effect on 1. July 1983.

In thus regard, a "sonic bomb" has been developed. It is magnetic and from a distance of 5 to ten meters finds a submarine hull, adheres there, and transmits for a rather longer period of time sonic signals, which not only irritate the submarine crew, but also guide the hunter to the submarine. This "weapon" is designated as "MALIN".

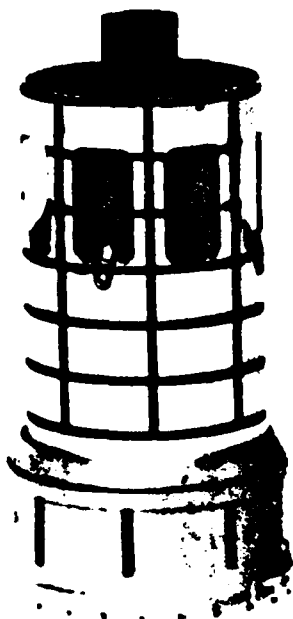
"ELNA" was developed as the next weapon; it is a small depth charge, which can be dropped in large numbers by various typed of ships and small craft on a submarine which has been located. ELMA is a "minimum bomb" with a small explosive charge, which is still powerful enough, to cause a considerable hole in the pressure hull of a submarine.

The third "peaceful" ASW-weapon is a wire-guided small torpedo, which /76/ can cause considerable damage to a submarine, but far from as much damage as a normal torpedo.

At the latest from 1. July 1983 these new "peaceful weapons" will be employed in hunting "unknown" submarines.

Perhaps then the frequency of the "vists" will decrease. If not, the Swedish Navy will have increased capabilities to force the unwelcome visitors to the surface. From this date, even normal depth charges are authorized to be dropped closer than now on an "unknown" submarine.

Foto: Schwed. Marine/Archiv Westerlund



The small depth charge ELMA developed for the "peaceful" ASW by the Swedish Navy



The "sonic bomb" MALIN developed for "peaceful" ASW by the Swedish Navy.

NINE FOREIGN SUBMARINES HAVE BEEN DETECTED FROM APRIL TO AUGUST 1982

The Horsfjärden intermezzo was Number 10 of the year 1982. On 29. April a "possible" submarine was sighted in the vicinity of Söderarm, a Swedish advance post in the Åland Sea. In June two "definite" submarines were detected in the southern Stockholm skerries. Later, there were two "probable" submarines, one outside of the city of Sundavall in the Sea of Bothnia and one in the southern part of Kvarken, the strait between the Sea of Bothnia and the Gulf of Bothnia. Attempts to block these submarines in were unsuccessful. In July there was a "probable" submarine in the northern Stockholm skerries, and in August there were three "definite" submarines at various spots in the same archipelago.

TWO PATROL BOATS "SWEPT" A SOVIET SUBMARINE

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After the submarine hunt in the Horsfjärden and other inland waters of the Stockholm skerries (archipelago), an event from 26. August 1946 was published for the first time.

The Swedish steamer VENERSBORG had disappeared with its entire crew 8 months earlier in the Gulf of Hanö, the waters between the two southern provinces Skåne and Blekinge. Only an empty lifeboat was found. The sinking occurred in international waters. Either the ship was torpedoed or it had struck a drifting mine.

The two patrol boats V 27 and V 30, the former torpedo boats BLIXT and ORKAN, received the order at the end of 1945 to search the suspected area of the sinking with their sweeping gear. After three days they got a "bite" on 28. August. This "bite" was so powerful, that it immediately stopped both ships. And then a real surprise developed: slowly a large fish floated to the surface, a Soviet submarine of the small type M, of only 200 tons. Below the Soviet flag, gradually several full-bearded Soviet sailors could be seen in the tower. They could not understand English or German. The sweeping gear had torn railing supports loose and had then stuck in a torpedo hoist.

The Swedish sailors released the sweeping gear and the submarine disappeared in the direction of Bornholm. Why was this submarine at the same place where it was suspected that the VENERSBORG had gone down? Otherwise, it happened that once a Soviet submarine was "swept" by two ancient Swedish torpedo boats.

Editor's Note: According to one Soviet source the VENERSBORG was sunk* by a Soviet submarine. Probably, the attacking submarine was K-56 commanded

* SSR v Velikoj Otecestvennoj vojne 1941 - 1945, Kratkaja chronika. Moskva, Izd. Nauka 1964, p. 658.

by Capt. 3rd Class I.P. Popov, which according to another Soviet publication*

* Grecanjuk, N.: Dimitiev, V.: Krinicy, F. and Cernor. in: Baltijski Flot. Moskva, Voenizdat 1960, p. 320. - v. also Polescuk, V.A.: Boevaja dejatel'nost' podvinyh lodok KBF yv 1944 - 1945 In: Krasniznamennyj Baltijski Flot v zaversajuscij period Velikoj Otecestvennoj vojny 1944 - 1945. Moskva Izd, Nauka 1975, p. 216.

sank "enemy" ships in the southern Baltic.

The landing craft 228 of the Swedish Coast Artillery in the submarine hunt in the Horsfjärden.

Photo: P.Diedrich, Svenkst Pressfoto

